

I call on you to hold an official public hearing in my state.

Before the disastrous 2003 decision to weaken media ownership rules (which a federal court has now overturned), you held only one official public hearing. Further, FCC officials met behind closed doors 71 times with major broadcasters – but only five times with public interest groups. And to justify your actions, you used deceptive, industry-sponsored research data.

The will of Big Media had been heeded at the expense of American citizens and democracy itself. This has to end. Before you rewrite the ownership rules, I demand an official public FCC hearing in my state, impartial and verifiable research, and transparent debates.

It is time to put the needs of democracy – a diverse, skeptical, independent and competitive media system – ahead of profit-hungry media giants.

Media consolidation is one of the most serious issues facing our country and seeing as it threatens the very idea of a truly free press, should be discussed openly throughout the nation in a forum open to the public. This is NOT an issue that should be passed-over quickly behind the scenes of terror alerts and the Iraq war. If indeed those who favor such deregulation have such a rock-solid case for their position, it deserves to be presented fairly and openly debated.